Private Flying

the German team, one of whom, Wolfgang Späte, flying a Minimoa sailplane, landed in Czechoslovakia after covering 176 miles. Sixth in order was the Swiss pilot Sandmaier, who went 90 miles. (This pilot, by the way, had achieved the longest distance—125 miles—among those who went on distance flights the previous day.) And seventh and eighth came two British pilots, Flt. Lt. P. M. Watt, in a King Kite, and P. A. Wills in the Hjordis. Mr. Wills flew 75 miles to Sondershausen, while Mr. Watt reached Jena and landed on a convenient aerodrome, after a flight of 78 miles. The aerodrome turned out to be occupied by a training school in connection with the German Air Force, and Flt. Lt. Watt was given a right royal reception. He was offered a good meal and then shown the sights of Jena, including the University and the Planetarium, and subsequently his hosts sat up with him till 2 o'clock in the morning waiting for the transport trailer to come and fetch him and his machine. As a final triumph, Flt. Lt. Watt found, on returning to headquarters, that he had won the special "daily prize," which for that day had been offered for height. He had, during the flight, climbed 7,644ft. above the previous lowest point, a feat which he performed by flying blind inside a large mass of cumulus cloud for an hour and a half!

Last Saturday, July 10, was one of those extraordinary days, occasionally met with at Wasserkuppe meetings, when one pilot gets well away and nobody else can do anything at all. The successful pilot was Heini Dittmar, flying the Sao Paulo sailplane (in which he set up a world's distance record on its first soaring flight three years ago). He left the Wasserkuppe in a west wind with little height to spare, reached another west-facing slope four miles away, and was gradually losing height there when a "cold front" came along and saved him. Having climbed high in this, within the clouds, he put up his speed to over 90 m.p.h. and left it for another "cold front" some way down wind, in which the rising current lifted him up again at a rate of as much as 33 feet per second. After similarly overtaking, and using, a third "front," Dittmar finally landed near Leipzig, having covered 110 miles.

At the end of the first week of the competitions it is of interest to add up the points so far gained by the various competitors, since it is on points that the principal prizes will be awarded.

Of the 32 competing pilots, only 19 have so far earned any points, since none can be earned for duration flights of less than 2½ hours, climbs of less than 500 metres, or distances of less than 30 kilometres

The totals show that the first four places are held by Germans, Dittmar coming out top with 986, plus any more given for height when the barograph record of his last flight has been homologated. After him come Späte, Hanna Reitsch, Hofmann, Sandmeier (Swiss), Schmidt (German), Mynarski and Baranowski (Poles), and then P. M. Watt with 190 points, all gained on his flight to Jena. Zabski (Poland) and Emmi von Roretz (Austria) follow, then comes P. A. Wills with 154.5 points. Farther down the list is W. B. Murray, with 41.25 points, gained on his duration flight on Thursday.

The members of the Frankfurt Air Rally came up to the Wasserkuppe in force, by means of motor buses, on July 10, but unfortunately the weather was so bad that there was little for them to see before having to leave again. Another visitor, just arrived from England, is Mr. F. N. Slingsby, whose firm at Kirby Moorside, Yorks, have constructed, and in four cases designed, all the machines entered by the British team for these competitions. He was being flown up from Frankfurt by Mr. McMurdo in Major J. E. D. Shaw's Avro Cadet when thick weather forced them to make a hurried landing in a field at Fulda, unfortunately damaging the machine rather severely, but luckily without hurting either of its occupants.

A. E. S.

A King's Cup Reminder

PROSPECTIVE competitors in the King's Cup Race, to be held this year on September 10 and 11, are reminded that entries at ordinary fees must be received by the Royal Aero Club not later than July 19. Late entries at double fees will be received up till August 2.

Three Hundred at Zurich

AT the International Meeting, to be held at Dubendorf aerodrome, Zurich, between July 23 and August 1, there will be something like 300 competitors of almost every nationality. Details have already been given of the various competitions, and it would seem that the meeting is going to be a huge success.

R.Ae.C. Official Notice

ITALIAN August Aviation Meeting.—The Royal Aero Club has received particulars of the International Competition for Touring Aircraft to take place in Italy on August 22-29 next.

The competition is open to touring aircraft the total power of which is between 85 and 400 b.h.p. The entry fees are moderate and include hotel accommodation and exemption from landing and garage fees.

Full particulars may be obtained on application to the Royal Aero Club, 119, Piccadilly, London, W.1.

HAROLD E. PERRIN, *Secretary.*

BOOK REVIEWS

Flying Years. By C. H. Keith. (John Hamilton, Ltd., 18s.)

THERE is perhaps only one way in which a traveller—sojourner would be a better word—can give a really vivid, intimate picture of the land in which he finds himself, and that is by constant detailed writing of notes either as letters or in a diary. Sqn. Ldr. (now Wing Cdr.) Keith chose letters, and has published them in book form, for which action his readers owe him a deep debt of gratitude. He tells of Iraq, in which he was stationed from the autumn of 1926 to the autumn of 1929, following which he had five months in Egypt and Palestine. After reading his book one feels that one really knows something about Iraq and Palestine, and one wants to go and visit them.

There are, of course, many standpoints from which a visitor may describe life in an Eastern country. One writer may only deal with the life in the European clubs and, perhaps, the riding, shooting and fishing. A second may write only about his Service, and, when that Service happens to be the R.A.F., may fill his pages with technical details of flying. Yet a third may study the country and describe its present and its past. Wing Cdr. Keith takes all three points of view and mixes his subjects with just perfect discrimination. There is plenty of information about each of the subjects, and never too much about any one of them.

He had a very full life there, dodging and racing the storms over the mountains of Kurdistan, dining with Bedouin sheikhs in the desert, exploring the Persian Gulf and the Oman peninsula, now frozen with cold, now baked with heat, and always very thirsty. He got to know the varied peoples of the country, he studied its history and antiquities, and he also made No. 6 (Bomber) Squadron one of the most efficient units in the R.A.F. Very early in his stay he wrote: "Life is really very pleasant and full of interest. Why fellows funk coming to Iraq defeats me!"

It should be added that every now and again, but not too often, Wing Cdr. Keith gives a glimpse of his serious, robust, and cheerful ideas on religion and philosophy. Altogether, it would be hard to praise this book too highly. It is almost unique, and very, very interesting.

Air Over Eden. By "HW" and Sidney Hay. (Hutchinson and Co., Ltd., 18s.).

BOOKS about Iraq are always welcome, and lately we have had two very good ones in *Euphrates Exile*, by A. D. Macdonald, and *Flying Years*, which is reviewed above. *Air Over Eden*, by "HW" (presumably Wing Commander Howard-Williams, M.C., Inspector, Iraq Air Force) and Miss Hay is more ambitious and perhaps less successful. The foreword is written by the late General Ja'far al Askeri, and he gives the book high praise. It is, in fact, full of merits and attractions, and yet there is something disjointed about it which debars it from being given first place. This jerky, disjointed style is particularly noticeable in the chapters which profess to give the history of the country, but which leave the reader more confused than instructed. Later on there are chapters about various sides of life in Iraq, and some of them make good reading, though all through one wonders if the book is a treatise on the country, a record of personal experiences, or an assertion of the advantages of using aircraft. The illustrations from photographs are very good.